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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

762a.5/4-1659

XR 740.6

Memorandum of Conversation

Date: April 16, 1959

Place: Room 5106, New State

XR 711.56300

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740.5

Subject: German Defense Problems

Participants: German

Defense Minister Strauss
Mr. Krapf, Minister, German Embassy
Major General Panitzki, German
Army
Col. Reppening, German Army

U.S.

Mr. Robert Murphy, Deputy Under
Secretary of State
Mr. Kohler, Deputy Assistant
Secretary, EUR
Mr. Vigderman, Deputy Director,
GER

Mr. Fessenden, Deputy Director,
EUR/RA

Mr. Devine, GER

Mr. Behr, REP/ENA

Copies to: G - Mr. Murphy, EUR - Mr. Kohler, GER - (2), GEA - (2), RA - (2),
WE, ENA, EE, Defense - ISA - Mr. Barringer (2), Embassy Bonn (2),
USRO (2), Embassy Paris for Thurston
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WEU Limitations. Mr. Strauss said that the Brussels Treaty (WEU) limitations on German armaments production were a cause of considerable difficulty to the German Government. It has taken much too long to have the restrictions lifted on specific projects. There are indications that the British and French have used the limitations as a sort of "economic blackmail" on the Germans in connection with some projects. In reply to Mr. Murphy's question as to the type of projects involved, Mr. Strauss named the Hawk surface-to-air missile, torpedoes, marine mines, modern destroyers, and large submarines. Mr. Strauss said that, in general, the WEU restrictions are today somewhat antiquated in view of new developments in weapons. He emphasized that the only projects that the Germans have submitted are those which have been NATO-approved. The problem, Mr. Strauss felt, was one of "general atmosphere." The attitude of the British and the French has not been helpful in these matters, and the German Government would appreciate any assistance the U.S. might lend.

Mr. Murphy replied that the U.S. was of course not a member of the WEU and therefore not in a position to act in WEU. However, the U.S. is of course desirous of seeing Germany participate fully in the common defense and we would consider what if any steps we might take in this matter.

Logistical Support After D plus 30. Mr. Strauss said that the German army currently has logistical support only for the first 30 days of hostilities and is most desirous of working out a procedure for obtaining logistical support after the initial period. The German authorities have proposed a procedure for setting up a joint U.S.-German committee to make it possible for the German forces

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forces to draw on U.S. stocks located in our depots in Europe, as well as elsewhere. Mr. Strauss said that he had raised this matter in the Pentagon during the morning session and was informed that this was a matter which had to be discussed with the State Department.

Mr. Murphy replied that we would look into this matter. (The German delegation was subsequently informed that the agreement of the French Government would be required for logistical support from U.S. depots in France and that the French Government had not as yet given its agreement to this.)

Integrated Air Defense. Mr. Strauss emphasized that the Germans see no sense in any air defense system in Europe which is not fully integrated. They are therefore naturally very concerned at the French attitude on this matter. In reply to Mr. Murphy's question, Mr. Strauss said that the Germans have talked at length with the French authorities and have found the latter to be completely in agreement on the technical necessity for integrated air defense. Unfortunately, however, the difficulties on this stem from de Gaulle himself. Mr. Strauss noted that it is very difficult to do anything with the French in the military field because of the need to refer everything to de Gaulle. He cited the agreement recently negotiated between the French and Germans for German use of depots in France. The agreement was all ready to sign when the French negotiators announced they had to have General de Gaulle's personal approval. Mr. Strauss asked that the U.S. use its influence to obtain French cooperation on integrated air defense. Mr. Strauss also observed that Chancellor Adenauer had discussed this problem with General de Gaulle and that they would continue to do what they could in their contacts with the French.

Mr. Murphy indicated that talks were currently in progress in Washington with the French and that we might raise NATO problems currently at issue with the French during these talks.

Nuclear Cooperation. Mr. Strauss referred to the discussions which he had had in the morning with Mr. Quarles on nuclear cooperation agreements under sections 144(b) and 144(c) of the revised Atomic Energy Act.

Mr. Murphy said that we were very glad to learn that the Germans were prepared to proceed immediately with prompt conclusion of a "144(b)" agreement, as required for the NATO atomic stockpile program. We believe that it is very important to complete these agreements as soon as possible so that they can be announced around May 1 well in advance of the opening of the Geneva Foreign Ministers' meeting May 11. We are also prepared to open negotiation of a "144(c)" agreement for cooperation in the nuclear propulsion field, although of course it would not be desirable to hold up negotiation of the 144(b) agreement.

Mr. Strauss confirmed that he was prepared to proceed immediately with the 144(b) cooperation agreement and that he and General Thatcher will be ready to sign as soon as they return to Bonn. He also confirmed the German interest in a 144(c) agreement.

German Alerts. Mr. Murphy raised the question of alert measures in Germany, emphasizing that this situation was not satisfactory. In view of the Berlin

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Berlin situation, it would be especially desirable if the German Government could pass the necessary legislation. Such action would help demonstrate the seriousness of our purpose in connection with the forthcoming meeting with the Soviets.

Mr. Strauss acknowledged that the situation regarding alert measures was unsatisfactory. Mr. Strauss recounted the history of this matter, pointing out that Chancellor Adenauer has for some time been reluctant to move ahead in this field. Mr. Strauss added that he has sought to change the Chancellor's mind on this and has been active in efforts to move ahead. At first the difficulty was that an amendment in the Federal Constitution was involved; the 1957 elections were a cause of further delay. Recently, Strauss said that he had stressed to Chancellor Adenauer that the Berlin situation calls for action and had proposed calling the Minister Presidents of the Laender to a conference. Adenauer had at the last minute turned down the most recent efforts to move ahead, saying that he did not want to excite public opinion.

Mr. Strauss then said that an underlying cause of the German delay on this matter is the fact that there are real doubts whether the necessary two-thirds majority could be obtained in the Bundestag. If the vote fell short, it would naturally have a very adverse effect on Germany's allies. Mr. Strauss said that the latest proposal which is to be discussed with the Chancellor is as follows: (1) laws would be passed for all measures not requiring a constitutional amendment; (2) the existing general conscription law would be fully utilized, which could permit the immediate mobilization of the Germans currently working in a support capacity with U.S., British, and other forces; and (3) for the remaining alert measures, the Three Powers would work out the necessary emergency laws designed to be put into effect.

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